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Our author lacks perhaps the method of a trained philosopher, but his mode of treatment is nevertheless interesting because he is possessed of common sense and is entertaining even where his ultimate thought is still subject to criticism.

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SEMITIC MAGIC. Its Origin and Development. By *R. Campbell Thompson*. London: Luzac, 1908. Pp. 283. Price, 16s. 6d.

This volume forms a very interesting contribution to Luzac's Oriental Religions Series. The theories contained in it are based on a most careful study of the development of demonology in Western Asia from the time of the cuneiform incantation tablets through the periods of rabbinical tradition, Syriac monkish writings and Arabic tales down to its present survival in modern Oriental superstition. Studied in connection with the parallels offered by Aryan and Hamitic notions, these superstitions combine to throw light on the origin and significance of many of the peculiar customs of the Old Testament. The author divides his subject in the light of certain deductions gleaned from a particular study of the characteristics of the evil spirits which the Semites believed to exist everywhere. These deductions, bearing on the primitive systems of tabu, are as follows: (1) all evil spirits could inflict bodily hurt on men; (2) the relations between human beings and either evil or divine spirits were close enough to allow of intermarriage; (3) from this belief in intermarriage with spirits originated the sexual tabus; (4) since a man might suffer from an unwitting tabu it was necessary to exorcise the demon by transferring the evil influence to some external object; (5) from this idea arose the atonement principle and idea of sin offering; (6) from this stage would naturally arise the substitution of sacrificial animals for the first born.

The book is furnished with a careful and detailed index, followed by a list of Biblical quotations.

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THE BURMESE AND ARAKANESE CALENDARS. By *A. M. B. Irwin*. Rangoon: Hanthawaddy Printing Works, 1909. Pp. 92. Price, 5s. net.

This book serves as a second edition to "The Burmese Calendar," published in 1901, but the author states in his preface that he has been able so to complete by further researches his former work that he is fully justified in giving it a new title. This is made necessary by including the Arakanese calendar together with the Burmese. The book is carefully prepared, the author's object being to make it intelligible and useful to both Europeans and Burmans. Mr. Irwin first describes the calendars as they are, next he shows certain errors in these calendars and points out their cause, suggesting also some alterations. The last part of the book consists of tables by the aid of which English dates may be changed into Burmese and *vice versa*. Tables I to III cover a period of 262 years, table I serving for past years and the others for the future. Table IX supplies the means for changing any date within these years from one calendar to the other.

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HINDU TALES. Translated by *John Jacob Meyer*. London: Luzac & Co., 1909. Pp. 305. Price, 8s. 6d.

This volume is an English translation of the *Ausgewählte Erzählungen* of Jacobi, to whom the author dedicates his work. With regard to the interest

of the stories here collected the translator sums them up in his preface with the following criticism: "The first story in the following collection is decidedly the poorest—a most insipid and tiresome performance. The tales increase in interest as we go along. The novella of Muladeva, which comes toward the end of the book, will fascinate many a reader. From the literary and from some other points of view the best of all these selections is the last—the poem of Agadatta. So I hope the general reader will not despair when he is confronted at the very outset by that wooden statue of a sensualist called Bambhadatta. The student will find much valuable matter in all the stories."

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ETUDES SUR LÉONARD DE VINCI. Par *Pierre Duhem*. 2. ser. Paris: Hermann, 1909. Pp. 473, Price, 15 fr.

This second series of studies on the most versatile of Italians, consists of four parts, of which the first treats of Leonardo da Vinci and the two infinities, the infinitely great and the infinitely small. The second part discusses his relation to the plurality of worlds. The third compares him with Nicholas de Cues, that philosopher of the Middle Ages who in his liberality of thought was virtually not a Mediæval philosopher at all, but an over-conservative modern. The fourth part deals with Da Vinci and the origin of geology.

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L'ANNÉE BIOLOGIQUE. Comptes rendus annuels des travaux de biologie générale. Publiés sous la direction de *Yves Delage*. Paris: Soudier, 1909. Pp. 508.

The 11th number of this valuable annual has come to hand. It gives a comprehensive survey of all the work done in the biological field in the year 1906. Its preliminary essay is on *Les colerations vitales*. It reviews work along 20 special lines as divided in as many chapters, and each of these chapters contains discussions of perhaps 50 authors and their publications in magazine and book form. Thus specialized the annual is of invaluable service to the specialist in any branch of biology, whether he is most interested in the cell, fertilization, ontogenesis, heredity, variation, or any other of the 20 main subjects included.

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BIOLOGY AND ITS MAKERS. By *William A. Locy*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1908. Pp. 469.

In this volume Professor Locy undertakes to bring under one view the broad features of biological progress, including not only the various phases of the evolution theory, but also the other features of biological research, some knowledge of which is essential to an intelligent comprehension of the former. He has endeavored to increase the human interest by centering his story around the lives of the great leaders in the various movements. The book is divided for convenience into two sections. In the first are considered the sources of the ideas that dominate biology, while the doctrine of organic evolution on account of its importance is reserved for special consideration in the second section. The text is illustrated very fully with portraits. Some of the rare ones are unfamiliar even to biologists, and have only been discovered after a long search in the libraries of America and Europe. The first